654 The saffron of Kashmir grown in one important locality
242 in the valley, is very famous. The Department has recently made some successful experiments in growing this saffron in Kishtwar in Jammu Province.

The Department also sends peripatetic parties of gardeners to the villages to demonstrate to the *zamindars* the operations connected with orchard laying. Demonstrations are given and the people educated regarding the control of pests. An Act for compulsory spraying of fruit plants has been promulgated. Agriculture, fruit, and flower shows are held annually at several places in the State to arouse the interest of the people in improved methods of agriculture, horticulture and floriculture.

The Department maintains poultry farms in which improved breeds are raised. Eggs and chicks are supplied to *zamindars* from these farms. His Highness' Government are a member of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research and the Council has provided funds for (1) the San Jose Scale and the Woolly Aphis Research Scheme, (2) the Rice Research Scheme and (3) the Vegetable Seed Production Scheme in the State. A fruit survey scheme has also been sanctioned by the Council.

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657 The establishment of *panchayats*[1] in the villages of the
[47] State under the Panchayat Act has received a great fillip
623 since 1937 with the creation of a separate Department of Rural Development. To start with the Government
[51] sanctioned a lump sum grant of Rs. 40,000 for execution of improvement works. The grant was raised to Rs. 1,00,000 later. Subsequently the grant of Rs. 40,000 provided for the *kandi* water supply was transferred to this Department, raising the total to Rs. 1,40,000 in S. 1996-97. In S. 1999 the grant stood at Rs. 2,00,000. The *panchayats* do not merely decide petty cases. They are engaged in the work of rural reconstruction and are co-operating with the Government in the matter of execution of improvement schemes in rural areas. Besides providing free manual labour for construction of village roads and sinking of wells and similar other works, the *panchayats* have also made cash contributions for these public ulitity works. Villagers are also contributing towards the purchase of the community Radio sets, digging of wells,

1 [ie, village councils, usually composed of five members -- Analyst]

5: Jammu U-3 (no date) 1944 AV1 Kashmir AV1

paving of village lanes, construction of drains and linking of villages by fair weather roads. In the domain of health and sanitation and anti-epidemic work, *panchayats* have shown especially good results. Cleanliness weeks have been celebrated and houses, compounds, lanes, springs, wells etc., have been systematically cleaned. Latrines and bath rooms have been constructed in a number of villages, thousands of manure and soakage pits have been dug and a large number of drains has been prepared. Cattle pounds have been opened in several *panchayat* areas and vehicle stands and slaughter houses have also been provided. Carefully planned campaigns are being arranged in selected areas with a view to educating the ignorant masses about the causes and prevention of common diseases. A Health and Sanitation campaign in Kashmir Province and an Anti-malaria campaign in Jammu Province have now become regular features of the activities of the Department. The *panchayats* take a prominent part in the distribution of better seeds and poultry to the *zamindars* under the guidance of the Agriculture Department. Extensive work has been carried on by the Rural Development Department in the cause of village uplift. Comprehensive economic surveys have been launched with a view to understanding the causes of the economic, social and cultural backwardness of the rural population. Over 2,700 villages have been surveyed so far.

Among the matters receiving the attention of the Department are the development of decaying village industries and propaganda for adult education. Two schools, one for shoe-making at Neloi and the other for knitting at Jatlan, in Mirpur, are functioning under the guidance of the Department.

The Department has also built tanks, bored deep wells, laid pipes and provided hydrams for water in the *kandi illaqa* of Jammu Province. Experiments in rock boring for drilling wells in the *illaqa* are in hand. During S. 1999, the budget allotment of Rs. 40,000 for supply of drinking water to the *kandi illaqa* was raised to Rs. 75,000. Further, His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur was gracious enough to donate Rs. 25,000 for construction of wells in the *illaqa*. Shri Yuvaraj Karan Singhji also donated Rs. 10,000 for the purpose.

657 To insure against food scarcity that had previously
623 threatened the village areas in Kashmir Province, the *panchayats* in Kashmir Province collected in S. 1999, 60,000 *kharwars* of *shali* and maize on *khush-kharid* basis for use in times of scarcity.

With a view to minimizing the migration of unskilled workers from Kashmir Valley to the plains in the winter for work and finding suitable productive work in the State itself for the men who migrate and as near their homes as possible, the Rural Development Department was entrusted with investigating the matter and preparing lists of men who migrate and the kinds of work suited to them. With the help of the *panchayats*, the Department was able to submit the details to the Government within a very short time of a month and a half. On the basis of this information, the Government appointed a committee for devising schemes calculated to provide labour to such labourers. As a result of the recommendations of the committee, Government sanctioned several schemes for providing employment to large numbers of people.

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656 Nor have the interests of the masses of the urban population which include manufacturers and traders, artisans and craftsmen, owners of house-boats and boatmen and skilled and unskilled labourers been lost
658 sight of. Primary education for boys has been made free and compulsory in the cities and important towns. As recommended by the Glancy Commission, the fees previously imposed on visitors to the Mughal Gardens near
651 Srinagar were abolished. Taxes on boat-men have in certain cases been reduced or remitted, and sites for mooring of house-boats have been provided either at
441 cheap rates or free of rent. An industrial exhibition
543 has been held at Srinagar annually since 1929. The exhibition attracts a large number of people including visitors, with the result that not only have there been greater sales, but there has been marked improvement in the variety and the finish of the goods produced. In order to provide assistance in the marketing of goods manufactured in the State, an Industrial Museum and Sales Emporium was opened at Srinagar towards the end of 1941. A similar institution has been started at Jammu also.